
All District Health Boards

2 May 2019

Facilitation best chance of settling RMO dispute

As the five-day strike by Resident Medical Officers draws to an end, DHBs say facilitation by the Employment Relations Authority (ERA) is the best chance for settling the dispute.

RMOs who are members of the NZ Resident Doctor's Association are striking for five days and DHB spokesman Dr Peter Bramley says support for the action has been falling.

"Up to 60% of RMOs have chosen to work during this strike. While most of the support is from RMOs just out of university, 72 per cent of registrars – senior RMOs training to become specialists – have been working since day one which shows many share our desire to find a settlement.

"We acknowledge there has been some disruption to the public which is unfortunate and unnecessary given the ERA had already provided a pathway to settlement through facilitation."

While the impact has varied around the country, Dr Bramley says the action has impacted smaller DHBs most.

"There has been a tremendous effort by senior doctors as well as the wider clinical team, administrators and planners all working to minimise the impact on patients.

"Hospitals in the main centres have been operating at about 75 per cent of elective capacity, even though Emergency Departments around the country are busier than normal.

"I also want to acknowledge the large number of RMOs who have chosen to work rather than strike this week. Far more people reported for work than expected which has enabled DHBs to maintain a higher level of service.

"Strike action has been entirely unproductive in helping resolve the important issues and has only impacted on the care DHBs provide their communities.

"DHBs believe facilitation next week is the opportunity to resolve this long-running dispute," says Dr Bramley.

ENDS

Spiro Anastasiou

021 450 599 spiro@senateshj.co.nz